



(U//FOUO) Rock Drills: Not Just for Military Planning Anymore

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(Or, "It's sedimentary, Watson"?) You may have heard of Rock Drills... but do you know the concept can be applied to ANY NSA plan, not just plans for military operations? (U//FOUO)

What Is a Rock Drill? (U)

(U) Rock Drills were developed as a way for military field commanders to test their battle staffs and subordinate commanders before the execution of mission. The commander would begin by disseminating his OPODER (Operations Order) for the mission. After his subordinates had time to process the order, they would be called together for a Rock Drill. In the Rock Drill each staff member or commander would discuss his particular role and mission during the operation. It was a productive way to ensure each officer understood his role and mission, and it helped identify any looming problems before the plan was executed.

(U) The Rock Drill received its name because of the tendency of commanders to use different shaped or colored rocks to represent different units. In the past 30 years, the Rock Drill has developed in size and scope. Now referred to as the Rehearsal of Concept Drill, or ROC Drill for short, its mission remains to test a plan prior to execution. However, the depth of detail and scope of today's Rock Drill is far broader than that of its predecessor. Additionally, the modern Rock Drill revolves around an adversary-driven scenario that adds realism and a further dimension to the plan validation.

NSA and the Rock Drill (U)

(S) In the last few years the Rock Drill has become a familiar, if often misunderstood, event at NSA. Starting with the Iraq Rock Drill in July of 2002, NSA has conducted numerous Rock Drills in order to address issues ranging from the AQLS* Spring Offensive to Threat Warning Procedures within PACOM*. Each of these Rock Drills has had its own unique flavor and each has been met with varied degrees of success. Recognizing the need to build upon the Rock Drill foundation that has already been laid, S132 Plans and Exercises has embarked upon a strategy of education, training, and extensive IMT* support designed to maximize the benefits of the Rock Drill and alleviate any confusion that still remains.

Rock Drill Application, Size, and Scope (U)

(U//FOUO) The Rock Drill is a very versatile tool that can be easily applied to any plan produced within NSA. Obviously, the Rock Drill will be instrumental to validate the NSA Functional Support Plan (formerly called the CSP) during Intelligence Campaign Planning in support of the Combatant Commanders. Each IMT that is geographically responsible for the Combatant Commander (COCOM) should use a Rock Drill to validate the **Functional Support Plan**. This becomes a powerful piece of information when dealing with the COCOM -- the IMT can reference a concrete exercise when discussing supportability, feasibility, and sustainability with the COCOM Joint Staff. The Rock Drill **can be applied equally successfully to a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)**. Whether NSA may face a hurricane, earthquake, or terrorist incident, the need for a validated plan remains the same. A Rock Drill easily fills this bill.

(U//FOUO) As the NSA/CSS enterprise continues to expand, the key TOPIs* for any given plan may become more and more **geographically separated**. Video teleconferencing, email, and other modes of communication become increasingly vital. A Rock Drill can easily be tailored to support this type of contingency. Size, time, and scope can all be varied to support a VTC or a planning conference that is working under substantial time constraints.

S132 Plans & Exercises Division Support to Rock Drills (U//FOUO)

(U//FOUO) As the focal point for Plans and Exercises within NSA, S132 is poised to support your Rock Drill needs. Whether working a major CONPLAN in support of EUCOM*, or testing the plan for NSA/CSS Georgia contingency missions in case of terrorist attack against NSAW, S132 will be your one-stop shopping center for Rock Drill support. S132 can pull together a team of experts to develop realistic and challenging scenarios that will stress the plan and ultimately lead to its validation. S132 can provide trained facilitators who, by interacting with the subject-matter experts, will bring out the nuances of the plan and help you establish its true worth. Additionally, S132 is tasked with liaison to the Combatant Commands and can bring the beneficiaries of the plan into the loop, thus improving NSA / COCOM relationships.

Point of Contact (U)

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* (U) Notes:

AQSL = al-Qa'ida Senior Leadership

PACOM = Pacific Command

IMT = Issue Management Team

TOPI = Target Office of Primary Interest

EUCOM = European Command

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